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# Informal Activities in Architecture Training: A Summer School Sample Historical Elmalı Town

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## Abstract

In architecture education, formal education should be supported with informal education in order to equip students with general architecture knowledge and improve their architectural design power.

Formal architecture education consists of all theoretical and practical courses that an architectural candidate should complete. Informal education, on the other hand, is an extracurricular education that students receive voluntarily to improve their architectural knowledge and skills. Training courses, archeological excavation and summer-winter vacation schools can set examples for informal education.

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## 1. Introduction

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Architecture is the discipline which creates healthy, liveable and aesthetical places for users by making use of the opportunities and limitations of natural environment in a way which will fulfil the desires and requirements of the users through specific criteria. As in the curriculums of other disciplines including design and creativity, theoretical and practical studio (design) courses aiming at helping students gain design and creativity skills occupy a significant place in architecture curriculums as well (Dikmen, 2011).

Although they have different descriptions, “architecture education” and “architecture design education” are often interchangeably used. Formal architecture education encompasses all institutional and practical lessons that should be completed by the architecture candidate. Informal architecture education covers educational environments consisting of free environments which help the individual completed his/her architectural education improve. Informal environments are those in which people act according to their intuitions, display their personalities in a better way, and in which they, as a frequently used saying, let the child inside them out. Boyd (1971) describes this as a person’s releasing from himself/herself, and from the limitation he/she has created.

From the point of view that one of the most important subjects is to broaden the perspectives of the students, within this scope, it can be easily concluded that formal education alone is insufficient. The common opinion of those engaged in architectural design education is that this education will not be limited to studio and school. Whole world is the observation field of the architecture student; therefore it is a part of education. Informal education refers to different orders, different environments where the school order changes and which help moving away from formal education (Yürekli, 1997). Some of the informal education environments might be arranged before or some of them might have appeared all of a sudden. Summer and winter schools constitute the most important part of informal education systems (Yürekli, 2004).

We can say that the biggest aspect that distinguishes summer and winter schools from other studies is that they encourage imagination and creativity in an environment free from limitations and formal processes. Creativity constitutes the backbone of design education. Regarding imagination and creativity Pallasmaa (1996; 7) states that: “The duty of education is to develop and support our imagination and our empathy skill. However, the dominant values of our culture discourage the fantasy, suppress feelings and sharpens the limit between the person and the world... Feigenberg (1991; 270) describes the aim of the education with the quotes from Piaget: “The basic aim of the education is to create individuals who do not repeat what’s done by the previous generations and who has the ability to do new things... The secondary aim of the education is to shape minds which do not accept everything given to them, and which are critical and affirmative.”

Acclaimed writer Mark Twain, with his “I have never let my schooling interfere with my education” words states his opinion on the necessity to separate individual’s informal education from formal education. In fact, writer states that he has no belief in formal education; in other words, he asserts that only informal education can turn into the experience of the individual.

The objective of this paper is to evaluate positive effects of informal architectural design education in Elmalı example from this point of view. To this end, Selçuk University Architecture Department organised a summer school to Antalya-Historical Elmalı City for a 15-day period in July 2010 with a team consisting of 20 people under the supervision of Assistant Professor A. Deniz OKTAÇ BEYCAN and Assistant Emine YILDIZ KUYRUKÇU. Field study is significant in terms of documenting cultural presences and in terms of giving opportunity to practice in the architectural education as well.

## 2. Field of Study: Elmalı Town

Elmalı is located in 120 km northwest of Antalya province, above southwest Taurus Mountains and on 1150 height. Because of the fact that it is on the commercial ways that connect Anatolia to Mediterranean, and thanks to its abundant water sources and fertile soil, it had been an important settlement for various civilisations throughout the history. Its region is dated back to Palaeolithic era according to historical Karain inn excavation while it is dated back to early Palaeolithic era according to Mesolithic and Semahöyük excavations. The area had lived in Lycia, Persian, Roman, Byzantine, Seljukian, Beylik of Teke, Karamanids and Ottoman period.

The city was founded in piedmonts of Elmalı Mountain and in a broad basin with Tilkecik hill in the east, Topdağ Hill in the West (Fig 1a). While the traditional city texture of Elmalı located in this basin had 23 quarters, they were reduced to seven in 1946. Two newly established quarters, first of which was founded in 1956 and second of which was founded in 1977, developed within early era regions in lower levels (Ekiz, 2001, 15). Traditional commercial centre gathered around Ketenci Ömer Paşa Mosque and Municipality Square is located between the old

and new settlement area of the city (Fig 1b). The fact that old and new city textures developed in two different regions enabled traditional texture to live without deterioration, however, the texture of vineyard region vanishes.

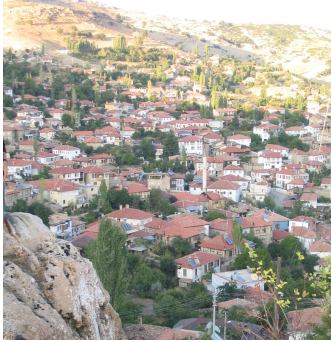


Fig. 1. (a) General view of Elmalı Town;



(b) Ketenci Ömer Paşa Mosque

### 3. Methods of Study

Different methods were used in the summer school organized in Elmalı city. Firstly, a trip, study field of which was shown was organized and observations and meetings were performed about the structures. In the first days of the study, information about surveying was given to the student (Fig 2a).. Firstly, field study started with the participation of all students and continued with different structures with groups consisting of four-five people after education reached a certain level (Fig 2b). Upon determining the structures on which students will study, they were photographed, information was received from the structure-owner and surveying measurements of the structures were performed (Fig 3a). The drawings of the structures surveying measurements of which were performed were completed on Autocad-2008 programme (Fig 3b).



Fig. 2. (a) Students exploring study of field;



(b) Five student group taking the measurements of the house



Fig. 3. (a) Students taking the measurements of the house;



(b) Students drawing houses measurements on Autocad-2008

### 4. Features of Study Field

One of the study fields is Hacı Haliller Street which is on the north side of the city. Second study field is Fethiye

Avenue which is on the west of Municipal Square and is within the settlement, commercial and administrative region of the city (Fig 4). Firstly, silhouette of the Hacı Haliller Street and Fethiye Avenue was taken (Table 1). Later, in the region determined as study fields, surveying study was performed. These houses are Tan House, Temizöz House on Hacı Haliller Street and Akınay House on Fethiye Avenue (Table 2).

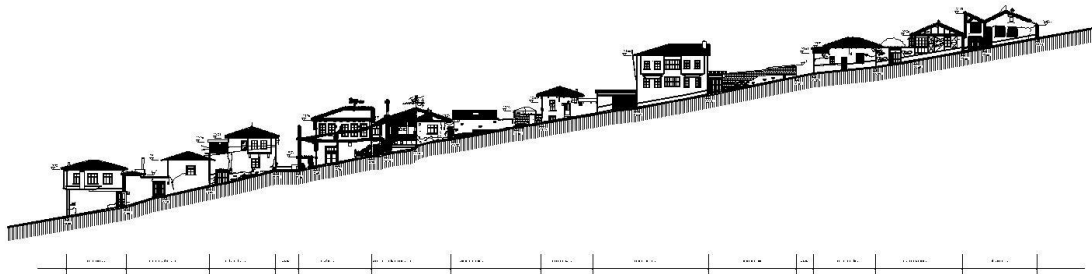


Fig. 4. (a) A view of Fethiye Avenue ;



(b) A view of Hacı Haliller Street

Table 1. Student practices 1



Silhouette of Hacı Haliller Street




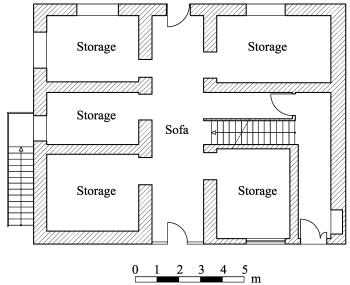
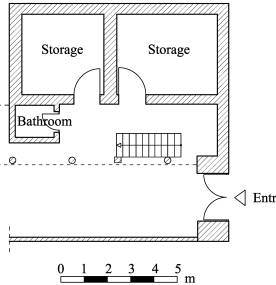
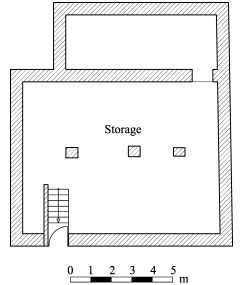
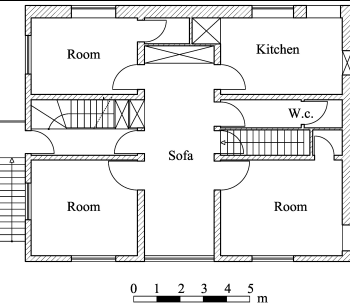
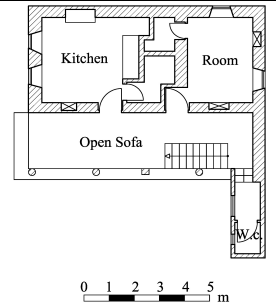
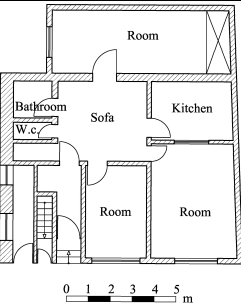
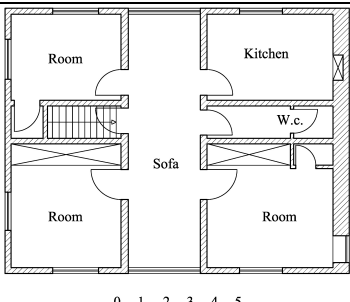
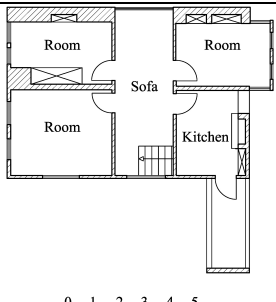
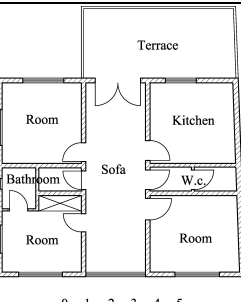


Silhouette of Fethiye Avenue

Table 2. Student practices 2

Ahmet Tan's House	Memiş Temizöz's House	Mehmet Akınay's House
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General view	General view	General view
		
Ground floor plan	Ground floor plan	Basement floor plan
		
First floor plan	First floor plan	Ground floor plan
		
Second floor plan	Second floor plan	First floor plan

## 5. Evaluation of Traditional City and House Texture

The primary factor in the formation of road and house texture of the city is the sloping land of Elmalı Mountain. Vast majority of the city roads on the sloping land are vertical to city roads. Streets have an organic structure that are curved from bottom to top and that become narrow and broaden from place to place. Dead-end streets which are

entering into the islands are flat or sloping according to land shape. Road textures which were originally stone were changed completely and concrete parquet texturing was performed. Stone garden walls or houses formed the street borders.

**Housing Feature:** In the fields examined, it was observed that the traditional houses were adjacent to the roads or were located in the part of the land close to the road. Houses were in separated order. As we went closer to the commercial houses, houses became attached buildings through filling the space between houses with shops (Fethiye Avenue House, etc.). There were two entrances of the house from the road both through the street and garden. In the house with entrance from street, yard which is an open or closed place was seen.

The entrances were given from upper floors or ground floors according to the state of the land. Stairs exit line in the houses with outer veranda are generally in parallel with the sofa border of the upper floor. In the inner veranda examples, the stairs can be between the rooms in a part of inner veranda. Traditional houses consist of a mezzanine floor and the third floor in which there is primary living unit apart from ground floor where service places are located. Despite the fact that Elmalı is a plateau city having continental climate, it is seen that old houses have open outer veranda plan (Houses in Hacı Haliller Street). Verandas are rectangular. Particularly, the long side of the veranda are directed towards the city view, the narrow sides of veranda and rooms are directed towards the road in Hacı Haliller Street.

**Front Features:** Traditional houses in Elmalı were shaped in differing ways according to the location of the parcel, the slope of the land, the number of the floors, the exits of the places and their shapes, the dimensions, number and material of the windows. The front directions of the houses were directed towards city view in south, east and west directions according to slope and land. If the back fronts of the houses do not see the road according to the view, small windows were opened and the front was left blank; because these fronts are the fronts seeing the neighbouring house. The attached buildings in Fethiye Avenue have only road and garden front.

**Construction System and Material Use:** Houses were built with massive construction and wooden carcass technique. Ground floor walls of the garden and houses rising on stone foundation were constructed with massive construction technique. In the buildings, adobe walls were seen after ground floor. In the houses left without mortar, wooden carcass structure was founded on the stone foundations. The structure between bearings were filled with stone in the lower part, some with stone and adobe and in the upper part with adobe and bricks. No matter which technique was used in the lower floor, in the upper floor cross partition and corbel walls are wooden carcass. These walls were constructed as plaster board walls between bearings and as light walls where laths were filled with wooden chips.

On haired (horse hair and straw pieces) soil mortar, light haired mortar including lime is applied.

## 6. Assesment and Conclusion

At the end of the summer school study performed in Antalya Elmalı City in 2010, 10 house surveying were prepared. In the study field, houses are mainly used as summer houses. The houses repaired in and out can be regarded as well-kept and comfortable for summer months. The number of empty and houses bad condition is low. In 2005, in Elmalı provincial a preservation area was determined by Ministry of Culture and Tourism Antalya Preservation Board and registrations in some buildings were performed. However, it has been identified by the study we have conducted that more registration should be performed.

According to Yürekli (1995), contrary to what is believed, reaching information is not indicating how it can be reached to the information stored. It is helping student gain the creativity to reach “new” information and in other words “to create new knowledge”. From this point of view, in current architectural design education, students should be freed from repressive, non-trusting, passivating environment of traditional education approach and they should be directed towards what’s active and improving their abilities should be aimed (Uzunarslan, 2011). In the winter and summer schools organized with the intention of exchanging architectural experiences in an environment which is based on the voluntariness principle, where there is no grade pressure and where theoretical information could be combined with practice, students understand and get to know the culture and original architecture of the country with their theoretical knowledge. The fact that students work within a specific team and organisation at designing and application phases increases their occupational and life practices (Ulusoy & Kuyrukçu, 2012). Besides, when students from different environments and students with different identities come together, intellectual

and cultural exchanges enhance and this helps the individual improve his/her personal and occupational identities (Ciravoğlu, 2003).

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